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Expanding Boundaries: Broadening Perspectives for Both Practitioner and Academic-Based Research

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Expanding Boundaries: Broadening Perspectives for Both Practitioner and Academic-Based Research

In this issue, we add a fifth university from a fifth nation to the hosting institutions of the GABC Journal and the attendant GABC Conference: India's Delhi School of Business. As with the 2014 expansion to Mexico's ITESM, the addition of the Delhi School of Business has deepened the central aim of the GABC Journal to international collaboration and partnership. Our sponsoring universities now are made up of Belgium's the University of Antwerp, India's Delhi School of Business, Malaysia's Technological University of Malaysia, Mexico's ITESM, and the USA' Eastern Michigan University.

With the addition of the Delhi School of Business, our related GABC Conference will also now rotate through each of the five countries: India, Mexico, Belgium, Malaysia and the United States.

The four articles in this issue also represent a broadening of scope in the articles here. Eugene Ohu's article "Cultural Intelligence Sounding the Death Knell for Stereotypes in Business Communication" lays out what he calls a *Message Coding Congruence* (MCC) model for decoding stereotyping and in organizational communication in multicultural settings. Ohu's MCC goes beyond existing national cultural-trait models to provide a unified model allowing people in multicultural teams and organizations to, "understand better how much of their observations and interpretations are victims of often wrongly held assumptions based on the cultural backgrounds of their interlocutors." Ohu specifically intends this unified model to move beyond academe alone for use in applied business settings. As he writes:

This framework should be useful in academic settings and in actual business environments. It would help in the training of managers and team members in effective communication that accommodates cultural diversity. Beyond training purposes the model also improve practitioners' awareness and understanding of the consequences of cultural differences and taking them into account in striving to attain organizational aims.

In presenting Ohu's study here, we are hoping to build on the GABC Journal's commitment to publish work that is not only useful in scholarly research but that is of direct value to the business and professional communities that we study.

We have in this issue also expanded the GABC Journal's commitment to a broad base of contributors. We have long committed to articles not only from the realm of academe but also to encouraging contributions from academically sound pieces from the business practitioners. Two of the four articles here are from just such business professionals, albeit both with teaching university teaching

affiliations: Karin Goettsch and Michael Coates. Karin Goettsch is a Global Talent Management Leader with adjunct professor positions at both the University of Minnesota and Concordia University and by Michael Coates who is Managing Director of the UK-based Protostar Leadership Development Ltd. with an adjunct professor position at Mexico's ITESM-San Luís Potosí campus.

As with Ohu's article, our second article is also intended for both a practitioner and research audience. Karin Goettsch's article "Global Virtual Teams: An Intercultural Communication Reality Check" links an underrepresented research facet of international business communication to global virtual teams. This in itself is useful for providing sound research in a fast-developing area. This is enhanced even further though for the point of view Goettsch provides not only as an academic researcher but as a practitioner. As she notes in the article, "the primary goal and value of this article... is to provide a less common glimpse into the practitioner's perspective in order to benefit all vested stakeholders, in academia and industry alike."

Our third article, Michael Coates' "Differences In Attitudes Toward Employee Engagement Surveys" likewise provides a practitioner's perspective. As Managing Director of the UK-based Protostar Leadership Development Ltd., Coates (like Goettsch) provides a first-hand point of view as an Organisational Development Consultant who, as he explains, is directly "involved in both administering employee surveys and re-engineering performance management processes, including communication that precedes implementation of those processes." It was also from his pragmatic experience that the rigorous research study presented here grew. As Coates explains: "The research question began to materialise when I became concerned that comparing engagement results between countries was at the very least problematic and potentially unreliable." Coates first presented his research on international attitudinal differences regarding employee engagement surveys at the 2016 GABC Conference in San Luís Potosí, for which he won the 2016 Best Paper Award. This article grew out of the research he presented there. The resulting empirical study of views toward

employee engagement surveys showed marked variation among employees from China, India, Mexico, Romania, the United Kingdom and the United States. This groundbreaking study should be of immediate value to both academics and practitioners alike.

Finally, we have also in this issue expanded to include our first scholarly pedagogical article: Michael Doyle's "Nicaragua's Grand Canal: A Case Study in Political and Economic Culture." As Doyle explains, "This short case study is neither a research nor a theoretical contribution per se, rather it is intended to serve as a theory-based pedagogical piece for developing critical thinking, problem-solving, and presentational skills, illustrative of the didactic genre, in a way that is applicable to multiple fields." Very few such multi-use cases exist in the field of international business communication, and we hope with publishing this piece to both help fill that vacuum and encourage others to write cases of a similar vein.